

who might be regarded as speaking with authority, either from their own distinction or from the interests they represent, should fail to receive full consideration. The witnesses have in the main been members of the governing bodies of the University and the colleges, University professors and other teachers, University students, representatives of commerce and industry, and public men. We feel much indebted to these gentlemen for the evident care and thoroughness with which their evidence was in general prepared. In almost every case it was presented in the form of a detailed typewritten statement, which your Commissioners had an opportunity of perusing before meeting the witness, and were thus enabled to make it the basis of their oral examination. Had this course not been followed it would have been impossible for us to have dealt with so large a volume of evidence in the brief time available for our inquiry. In all no fewer than 171 witnesses were heard—57 in Wellington, 39 in Auckland, 38 in Dunedin, and 37 in Christchurch. We have also been furnished with copies of important papers, documents, calendars, &c. During our stay in each University centre we visited the colleges, inspected their class-rooms, laboratories, and libraries, and formed some idea of their general equipment. We have, further, taken the opportunity of visiting certain schools—the Rural High School at Rangiora, the two High Schools, for boys and girls respectively, at Timaru, and also the Lincoln Agricultural College. One of your Commissioners also visited the Waitaki High School at Oamaru, and the District High School at Matamata.

As our inquiry proceeded we have been increasingly impressed with the wide extent of the ground to be covered, and the number of important supplementary questions which have arisen from time to time and seem to demand treatment in any exhaustive report, but which the limited time at our disposal renders it impossible to deal with adequately, if at all.

We have been fortunate in being able to make use of the reports of three recent Royal Commissions upon University government—the University of London Commission, 1912, the University of South Africa Commission, 1914, and the University of Wales Commission, 1918. As these universities were at the time of the inquiry working under a federal system of organization the reports contain much valuable matter applicable to the problems of the New Zealand University. The conclusions we arrive at in our report agree substantially with those of the three Commissions mentioned.

At the request of the University Senate, Professor T. A. Hunter attended the meetings of the Commission when evidence was being taken, in order to advise the Commission upon questions of fact in regard to University administration. We desire to place on record our great appreciation of the services rendered by Professor Hunter, whose wide and accurate knowledge of every detail connected with the constitution and working of the University proved invaluable to us.

We also desire to acknowledge the assistance we have received from Mr. R. M. Campbell, B.A., LL.B., of the Education Department, who has tabulated statistics for us and prepared the appendices to this report.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT.

It would appear that the first practical steps towards the establishment of a university in New Zealand were taken as a result of the deliberations of a Committee of both Houses of the General Assembly in 1867, on a petition by Mr. F. C. Simmons, Rector of the Otago Boys' High School, that scholarships should be awarded to New Zealand pupils and tenable at universities in Great Britain.

The order of reference of the Committee was "To consider whether it would be advisable to endow scholarships to enable pupils from the leading schools of the colony to obtain a university education in the United Kingdom, and to establish one or more universities in the colony."

The following is an extract from the Committee's report:—

"With respect to the foundation of a colonial university, the Committee consider that the colony is not yet sufficiently advanced in population and other material particulars to allow of its being undertaken immediately with any